WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A gene having the identifying characteristics of a replication protein A transcriptional activator 1 (RBT1) gene encoded by a nucleotide sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

2. A gene according to claim 2, said gene being from a species selected from the group consisting of human, mouse, rat and yeast.

3. A protein having the identifying characteristics of a protein encoded by a nucleotide sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

4. A protein according to claim 3, said protein being from a species selected from the group consisting of human, mouse, rat and yeast.

5. A protein according to claim 4, said protein consists in the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:2.

6. Use of a gene according to claim 1 for the preparation of a medicament for gene therapy, wherein said gene is used as a promoter for overexpressing a gene in a suitable tissue.

7. A method of gene therapy, which comprises the use of a gene according to claim 1 as a promoter for overexpressing a gene in a suitable tissue.

8. A method for inducing apoptosis of a targeted cell, said method comprising inserting into said cell

a gene for apoptosis operably linked to a suitable promoter.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein said promoter consists of a RBT1 gene promoter.

10. An antibody raised against a gene according to claim 1.

11. An antisense oligonucleotide hybridizing under stringent conditions to a mRNA encoding a RBT1 gene as set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.